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Joyce Votes to Reform Criminal Justice System, Protect Communities and Save Taxpayer Dollars

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congressman Dave Joyce (OH-14) voted for the broadest criminal justice reform in decades. The First Step Act, which previously passed the Senate by a vote of 87 to 12, passed the House by an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 358 to 36 and is now on its way to be signed into law by President Trump.

“As a former prosecutor, I’ve always believed in the rule of law and that those responsible should be held accountable and face appropriate punishment. I also know that locking up every person who has ever made a mistake and throwing away the key is not the most effective way to protect our communities or keep people out of the prison system in the long run. The reforms put into place by the First Step Act will help reduce recidivism, make communities safer and save taxpayer dollars. I’m proud to support this legislation and will continue to fight for additional criminal justice reforms that benefit all Americans.”

Specifically, the First Step Act will provide judges with more discretion when sentencing people convicted of nonviolent drug crimes and authorize \$75 million annually from fiscal year 2019 through 2023 for programs to reduce recidivism. The bill will also bolster programs to help individuals reintegrate into society after release, prohibit solitary confinement in juvenile facilities except in extreme cases and allow certain, low-risk federal prisoners to earn credits to serve their remaining sentences on home confinement or a similar arrangement.

Joyce spent more than 25 years as the Geauga County Prosecuting Attorney after serving in the Public Defenders Office. Throughout his time in law enforcement, Joyce built a reputation as being a protector of both Geauga County families and taxpayers, making it his priority to provide the highest quality legal work in the most cost-efficient way possible.

“The First Step Act is a great example of what can be accomplished when both parties put aside their differences and work with the White House to benefit the American people,” said

Joyce. “I’m hopeful that this legislation will encourage those at the local, state and federal levels to continue to work together to solve the problems facing our criminal justice system.”

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